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U. S. Department of Agriculture

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In 3 hr
HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "VEGETABLES AS MEAT ACCESSORIES." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Choose your accessories with care, say the spring style notes. No matter how carefully you've selected your coat or dress, you ruin the effect if your shoes and hat and gloves are the wrong color or out-of-character.

And when style is so much talked about I think we're inclined to get style conscious about everything. Even foods! Even about a good old standby like canned meat.

So I'm going to pass along to you today a few suggestions about styling or maybe it will be re-styling your meat dishes.

Now don't let me give a wrong idea here of what I mean by style in food. I don't mean fads that haven't a good common sense idea behind them. There's a great difference between being receptive to a new idea and taking up with some freakish fashion in serving foods.

And when it comes to style -- whether it's in hats or in foods -- it's the men who are the best conservatives. Art for art's sake leaves them cold. We've all heard them sniff at fancy salads and over-garnished platters and poke a fork suspiciously into one of "Mary's new concoctions."

And the "men-folks" are right, sometimes. For instance, the accessories needed to make a savory dish from a can of beef must belong.

Four of the vegetable accessories that do belong with beef are cabbage, rice, onions, and tomatoes. They add savor and interest to that beef. One dish which combines all four of them is the cabbage roll.

To make it you wilt the cabbage leaves in hot salted water just long enough so that they will roll easily. Then put onto each leaf a mixture of ground meat, chopped onion, and boiled rice moistened with tomato juice and seasoned to taste. Roll each leaf up around the filling and lay it in a baking dish. Pour over the rolls a little tomato juice -- enough to cover the bottom of the dish. Cook only long enough to get the cabbage leaves tender. Now there's your beef, re-styled to satisfy the most fastidious.

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Then there are always the stews as ways to use canned and left-over meats. Vegetable accessories may be turnips, carrots, and onions all cooked together in the meat broth before the meat is added. Dumplings, meat pies, turn-overs, baked meat pin-wheels are always eagerly accepted by the family.

Another way in which vegetables are of value is for garnishes. And in my opinion a garnish ought always to be something you can eat. So all those I shall suggest will be edible ones.

I like the bright orange carrot as well as anything for garnish. It is attractive cut into long slivers. And did you ever try cutting them cross-wise, paper-thin for garnish? After you've sliced the carrots put them into a dish of water and in a half hour they will have curled up like potato chips. But you must cut them almost paper thin to get them to curl nicely.

Cucumbers either sliced across or cut lengthwise in sticks look pretty. And let me urge you not to pare off that pretty dark green outer skin. It's just as good eating as the pale green part inside. Undoubtedly has more vitamin A content.

Which reminds me of a friend of mine who lived for several years in China. She used to watch almost with horror the way the Chinese would eat cucumbers -- the whole cuke, not bothering to cut off the dark green skin. And she wondered how they survived. Then when she returned to the United States she discovered that her home economics friends had also started eating cucumbers without paring them. During the years she had been away from America research people had found that the cucumber skin not only was not poisonous, but was well worth eating.

The other day I was at a dinner where half a small head of purple cabbage was used for a center piece for sliced meats. It had been cut so that the purple and white streaks could show most effectively.

Green peppers cut into rings and laid around a plate look spring like, and hint at the ever popular St. Patrick's Day shamrocks. Little spring onions also suggest green things growing. All the green leafy garnishes are attractive, of course: curly endive, water cress, parsley leaves, mint leaves.

Pickles make colorful garnishes: the big dills cut into cartwheels, the little dark green sweet pickles. And pimento slices add gaiety to the appearance of a dish.

You might make plate decoration the work of that grade school daughter. Youngsters often love to fix up attractive dishes. It's creative work and gives them a chance to use their imagination.

Today's style note then is: Vegetables make excellent accessories both in the make-up of a left-over meat dish and also in garnishing it when it's ready to be set upon the table.

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